

1 inside-the-beltway political world were shocked, unnerved, and
2 moved to action, you can imagine the vast majority of our
3 fellow citizens who have no idea that this discussion is going
4 on. I will, in some remedy to this, be discussing with
5 President Sweeney later this week, the activation of the
6 multimillion member working families e-mail network. And we
7 will send out an alert about this discussion and urge millions
8 of our colleagues and citizens to participate in the happy
9 resolution of this discussion. Thank you.

10 **MR. WESTEN:** Thank you, John.

11 Our final speaker is Jay Levin, who's president of Share
12 with Other L.A., which creates public education around poverty
13 work. He's also chair of the Steering Committee of Media
14 Challenge and Founder of L.A. Weekly. Jay.

15 **MR. LEVIN:** Thank you. I, of course, want to thank the
16 Annenberg School and the law school and Sandra for making this
17 possible and for the Commissioner for coming.

18 I'm sitting here representing not just myself but most of
19 the -- much of the leadership and the -- of the groups that put
20 the antiwar demonstrators in the streets. Most of those people
21 came from existing social action organizations. And I -- the
22 Share With the Other L.A. campaign is a group of pro-bono media
23 volunteers who do public education about poverty in L.A.
24 County, and we work with an enormous range of coalitions and
25 grassroots organizations. So I'm here in that role as an

1 activist.

2 And in my media role, aside from founding the L.A. Weekly,
3 I've sat on boards of local -- low-power TV networks. I
4 started a cable network. I know the industry. So I -- I've
5 been on both sides of the power belt. The -- I want to thank
6 Val in particular and John as well because I've got so much to
7 say that they helped me refine it down. Val by pointing out so
8 much of the material that doesn't get covered locally.

9 The Share campaign originated to deal primarily with the
10 poverty issues in L.A. County. As we sit here right now, the
11 official poverty rate is 1.4 million people in L.A. County of
12 the 10 million people live in poverty. Now that's the official
13 rate. The actual rate is nearly 4 million people because in
14 fact the cost of living in L.A. is far higher than the national
15 cost of living, so the struggle here for people, the 40 percent
16 of our population who are not reflected in the news media, to
17 get by is overwhelming. So overwhelming that the County Health
18 Department found that 1.4 million people are "food insecure."
19 So bad is this situation that six to seven hundred thousand
20 people in the course of a year have serious bouts of hunger.
21 Of which about 500,000 of them are children. So this is the
22 county we live in, unbeknownst to the people who are not
23 suffering. This is the -- and that unbeknownstness is a pure
24 factor of the media.

25 It's a pure factor of the fact that this is not an

1 interesting story because it's not the kind bleeding that's
2 going to lead. It's not the kind of imaginations in local
3 television news that can say, let's make it -- this is -- this
4 is drama. Those people lining up at those pantries to eat --
5 to get barely nutritious food is drama. Those people who can't
6 get healthcare is drama. If we need drama, this is real drama.
7 This is happening in our community.

8 The wealth gap in this community is drama. The shift of
9 wealth nationally -- locally and nationally is drama. The
10 takeover of all media forms of -- media form and -- and the
11 control of what people get to know about social issues is
12 drama. That's not conceptualized in the local media. It's
13 certainly not conceptualized on KTLA since the -- since Tribune
14 took it over. It has never been. KTLA has actually been one
15 of the worst stations on covering the antiwar movement. It was
16 one of the worst -- had often the most misinformation about the
17 size of demonstrations. It denied -- it denied the
18 spokespeople from the movements space -- places to talk. And
19 in fact, it ignored some of the very fine reporting coming --
20 coming out in the L.A. Times.

21 L.A. Times was among those many newspapers that piece by
22 piece disproved everything Colin Powell had to say and
23 everything that the administration has had to say about why we
24 went to war in Vietnam. Every lie that was told the L.A. Times
25 reported. KTLA did not. And this -- it's not a mistake that

1 this happened, that KTLA would be -- would not do this. It's a
2 different market. It's a different world. It's a different
3 sensibility. It's a different culture. The idea that TV would
4 come -- that local TV would come in and make a difference by
5 cross-ownership belies the fact which John -- I can say in one
6 sentence because John said it so well -- belies the fact that
7 in fact the advertising culture makes a very big difference.

8 The second -- the second reason that we should not let
9 that happen on a mass level is because it doesn't end there.
10 It doesn't end when the Tribune captures these -- these
11 markets. It doesn't end because of the business -- business
12 rule called exit strategy. An exit strategy is, how do we
13 maximize our profit? And how do we increase our power and how
14 do we drive to consume and improve our bottom line? And the
15 takeover media merge in this country, in all industries, the
16 monopolizations of the media industry in particular are classic
17 examples of why -- why it will not end here.

18 So we can look down the road for 10, 15 years and maybe
19 we'll have FOX taking over the Tribune and buying Tribune
20 Company. And (inaudible) all these XTRA stations or Clear
21 Channel. Who knows where it's going to go? So it has to stop
22 somewhere. And now is a good a time as any and the rules are
23 as good a time as any. It not only has to stop, it has to go
24 in exactly the opposite direction to make it real difference.

25 Let me tell you -- let me tell you how corrupt this system

1 is, because that's so fundamental to the process here. The --
2 the core -- the core decision that was made some years ago
3 about media ownership and media control had one core -- one
4 important factor at a time that the electoral process was
5 moving into -- into having to use television and broadcast
6 for -- for campaigning. The cost of campaigning skyrocketed.
7 The TV -- the then-present TV companies fought diligently and
8 hard to make sure that they did not have to provide any public
9 airtime to candidates. So what's happened in the processes, of
10 course, is that every -- the candidates have to raise millions
11 of dollars from where the wealth is. The wealth is in -- the
12 wealth is in the hands of the corporate elite. Why is the
13 Democratic party lame? Because they have to compete there.
14 How do they keep -- how do we keep making sure that those
15 people who do get in don't -- don't buy it? Well, for one
16 thing, if we're media we -- we can threaten them with a story.
17 For another, we can buy them too.

18 So the media corporations are among the biggest campaign
19 donors. They spent millions of dollars in every election
20 cycle. To -- to guarantee that the rules don't change that
21 serve them so well. Viacom's net \$1.9 million in the last.
22 AOL-Time Warner, 1.4. The Disney Company, 1.2 million.
23 That's -- GE and -- G -- well if you combined GE, Microsoft --
24 there's 5.8 million. This is a lot of money going to -- very
25 precisely controlled hands. They know how to do this.

1 They know how to -- so what you have is -- you have, we
2 know have a system in which, unbeknownst to the public because
3 the TV networks will not tell the public that any of this is
4 happening -- we have -- we have a situation in which the
5 campaign the -- they can get from Congress, from the FCC,
6 certainly from the Bush Administration, which only acts on what
7 it's campaign donors do. There's 1,200 -- there's 1,200 key --
8 lobbying key -- key administration rules making positions in
9 the government in the various agencies. All 1,200 have been
10 filled by lobbyists from -- from the industries they're
11 supposed to regulate.

12 There is nothing that a campaign contribution -- you don't
13 see that on television. You don't see the television news
14 telling you where the -- the system is breaking down. That
15 everything -- the decisions being made in Congress that are
16 being ignored. Are being paid for -- are being paid for. You
17 don't see votes linked to it. You don't see any of this
18 coverage at all on television. You'll see some of it in the
19 newspapers, but like the war coverage, it doesn't drift over to
20 television. And for a good reason. Television doesn't want
21 mess with the system. It's a fix. They are -- they are the
22 twin pillars of what is not -- what is now an autocracy, a
23 plutocracy, an oligarchy -- name it what you want, it's not a
24 democracy. We live in the illusion of democracy. This roomful
25 and what we're doing here is an illusion of a democracy.

1 We have -- we have within the constraints of the -- the
2 social action groups and the peace groups created a new project
3 called Media Challenge. Media Challenge is -- is to mobilize
4 citizens to take on -- take on this behemoth directly, because
5 it's not -- it's not a game anymore. We have -- while we are
6 shifting huge amounts of money statewide -- and certainly
7 federally to -- to the wealthy, every single budget line that
8 affects poor people, that affects the middle class, like
9 transportation, veterans' benefits are being cut savagely.
10 With no coverage from the media, locally or nationally. We
11 are -- we are seeing a mass takeover from -- by a small group
12 at -- at the top.

13 And if that sounds Socialist, so be it. I'm -- it happens
14 to be that -- a capitalist reality that happening to us now.
15 And the -- and the -- the driving wedge to make this happen are
16 the five companies that -- that run the TV networks. They
17 control -- 58 percent of this public, unfortunately, gets its
18 bulk of its news and its sense of reality awareness from the
19 television networks, these five companies, the five companies
20 that control the TV networks. So 25 percent of them get it
21 from the conservative networks. So whatever else the rest of
22 us might think or believe or want to see happen, when push
23 comes to shove it doesn't end up in the public -- in the public
24 debate.

25 We have a world that doesn't get covered either in

1 entertainment news or in publishing news. We have a world
2 that's on the -- on the positive side, we see huge, huge, huge
3 historical awareness, awakenings and awarenenses in human
4 development. In ecology -- on the NGO level and grassroots
5 economics systems that can actually work. We see -- we have
6 the most profound reason in human history to be really positive
7 and hopeful. There are extraordinary solutions out there,
8 extraordinary vision, extraordinary human beings, not one of
9 whom will ever see the light of day in television or rarely see
10 the light of day in local -- either locally. They exist in
11 this community on every level -- on every level.

12 This community is diverse and interesting and rich
13 beyond imagination. You will not find that on local
14 television. The -- one more minute -- okay. On the other hand
15 the dark side, the nuclear -- the nuclear -- the nuclear
16 holocaust. The -- that's pretending -- the depleted uranium
17 holocaust, you know. The -- the corporate malfeasance
18 holocaust. All of this is -- this is ignored. So in the most
19 essential senses, what we deal -- media -- we leave the media
20 to deal not with the most important public space. Our lives,
21 our democracy, gets left to the trivialization of media. That
22 can't go on anymore if we're going to have a life -- if we're
23 going to have a meaningful life of our health, pocketbooks and
24 wealth. And a public health consciousness. The education of
25 our children. The very way we live on the planet.

1 Where we can have a nurturing culture, which -- a
2 culture that reflects the nurturing values rather than the
3 culture that reflects these -- these competitive values. These
4 male competitive values keep -- keeps predominant. We don't
5 see any of that on TV.

6 Finally, to sum up, we're not without -- Media
7 Challenge, we've been talking to the media democracy groups.
8 We've come up with a number of things we think are extremely
9 important. Of course stopping this dead is -- is important.
10 Beyond that we want -- we want to see a return to, but even a
11 far greater -- far greater controls on the licensing of local
12 TV networks.

13 They -- the idea that they perform in the public group
14 interest before -- license renewals, of those licenses renewals
15 come up very frequently. Every three years or so -- two, three
16 years or so. That they be very, very, rigorously enforced
17 and -- and the understanding what's in the public good and
18 public interest be there. That's necessity.

19 We think there ought to be fees paid -- huge fees
20 paid in which -- for any -- for any use of public airtime or
21 the underground channel space. We think that that money should
22 go into fostering a -- as in Europe, a large segment of
23 public -- public television. And we think that -- and
24 community controlled television with whole new rules written
25 about who gets to have access.

1 And finally, we think that news as it exists -- and
2 we -- and with Media Challenge we're telling the news
3 (inaudible) we're going to do everything we can to stop you
4 directly. And we are going to do everything we can to stop
5 your legislatively. We think that the news -- news must be
6 divorced from profit. That -- that their fees have to go into
7 a fund, that other organizations and institutions get the --
8 get to make the news and decide what the news is. My time is
9 up. Thank you.

10 **MR. WESTEN:** Thank you. Let me first thank the panelists
11 for their really extraordinary contributions. Also, the USC
12 Annenberg School of Communications and the USC Law School for
13 hosting this event, Sandra Ortiz. And finally, Commissioner
14 Copps and Commissioner Adelstein, who were kind enough to join
15 our proceedings.

16 Because of the shortness of time, we want to proceed into
17 the opportunity for public comments right away. Before we
18 do -- and Sandra will take over that part of the proceeding --
19 let me just conclude with two very brief thoughts on this last
20 panel involving the First Amendment and presumptions -- a legal
21 term.

22 First, H.A. Liebling once said that freedom of the press
23 belong to the man who owns one. It can also be said that
24 freedom of speech belongs to us all. And by placing the First
25 Amendment -- by placing in the First Amendment both freedom of

1 speech and freedom of -- freedom of speech and freedom of
2 press, the framers set up a very interesting and important
3 dualism.

4 We need the press. We depend on the press for a
5 full, wide-open range of diverse and robust ideas. In fact,
6 the press is probably the only institution, private
7 institution, in the Constitution that's given protection. It's
8 the only private business that receives constitutional
9 protection and it's that important. But if the press becomes
10 too large and too concentrated, then potentially an unlimited
11 press can impair freedom of speech, our freedom of speech. To
12 express ourselves through outlets and to hear a full, wide-open
13 range of ideas. So balancing between these two freedoms is an
14 extraordinarily difficult but important task.

15 And the second involves presumptions. We never have
16 perfect information. So do we -- does the FCC loosen the
17 ownership rules unless someone can prove evidence of abuse? Or
18 does the FCC preserve, retain or even tighten the ownership
19 rules unless someone can prove that increased concentration is
20 harmless?

21 In each case it requires a presumption. A presumption
22 that greater concentration is good or a presumption that
23 greater concentration is bad.

24 The difficulty is that -- that the courts seem to be
25 saying that the FCC cannot retain the existing rules unless

1 there is shown evidence of potential harm. It's very difficult
2 to accumulate without putting it in place and trying it. In
3 the scientific world, we run experiments. In the public policy
4 world, those experiments are very difficult to run because they
5 are very hard to unravel.

6 So I would conclude by saying that the FCC is really
7 confronting an extraordinarily difficult job. And when this
8 issue gets to the United States Supreme Court, as it undoubtedly
9 will, the Court will not only have to decide whether it's
10 judgments are correct in terms of loosening or retaining
11 ownership rules. They will also probably have to begin to
12 consider the balance between freedom of speech and freedom of
13 press. And ultimately, they will have to decide whether the
14 presumptions that Congress and the courts have placed on the
15 FCC are themselves constitutional.

16 In other words, has it tilted too far in favor of
17 freedom of the press to acquire or is enough deference being
18 paid to the individual's freedom of speech, both to speak
19 through the media and to hear through the media?

20 Extraordinarily difficult and important challenges that
21 will affect, undoubtedly, our children through the next
22 century.

23 So thank you very much for being with us and let me turn
24 it over to Sandra. Thank you.

25 **MS. ORTIZ:** Those of you who signed up for public

1 comments, if you could come forward and we will get as many of
2 you in before Commissioner Copps has to leave.

3 I'm asking each of the people who are participating in the
4 public comments to -- to keep their comments to just two or
5 three minutes. And I will cut you off. And identify
6 yourselves very briefly by name and affiliation. Thank you.
7 That one? Okay.

8 **MS. PRUITT:** I'm Jean Pruitt, and I'm president of the
9 American Film Marketing Association, which represents 150
10 independent production and distribution companies. I have two
11 points. One of which is that, notwithstanding some of the
12 commentary in the first panel, it is not hard to define an
13 independent. In this industry or in any other, an independent
14 from our perspective are -- is a company whose productions are
15 funded outside the major studio system. It is not a production
16 done by the studio down the street. And it is not necessarily
17 or exclusively something edgy, done by a student with a video
18 cam off to the side.

19 It is, in fact, quite frequently a 65 to 200 million
20 dollar picture who -- which was financed independently, usually
21 by reference to going to a whole series of people and
22 distributors to try to get the money.

23 I think that as you look at what has taken place in the
24 United States since the Seventh Circuit set aside FINSYN, you
25 could conclude that we have already run the test lab on what

1 will happen if we go to total deregulation.

2 The independent industry today, by and large, cannot
3 distribute a film to a theater without a studio deal. You
4 cannot get your picture on video in Blockbuster or
5 Blockbuster's competitor without a studio deal. The
6 independents do not, by and large, produce network TV series
7 because there is no place for them. And today, there is
8 virtually no significant cable network that is acquiring
9 product from outside its own internal workings or the
10 "re-purposing from networks."

11 Why should the FCC care about that? I think they should
12 care about it for a lot of the reasons that have already been
13 stated. One of which is simply there are a lot of other
14 stories out there that will not get told if we limit the
15 production process to a few studios. But the larger reason
16 relates to two things. One of which is that the independents
17 are in fact the test lab themselves for the entire industry.

18 This is the way new voices come up the process. This is
19 the way new actors, new directors and new stories come forward.
20 Some of them are fabulous, some of them are not, but without
21 that process you limit the industry to a very narrow spectrum.
22 And that would damage the American public.

23 I think the other thing that we are seeing increasingly,
24 and it has economic and employment consequences as well as
25 subject matter consequences, is that most independent film

1 production today is largely dependent on foreign co-productions
2 and subsidies. And over time that means that the stories which
3 are being told are not U.S. stories. They are increasingly
4 shifting to stories of the jurisdiction that has helped finance
5 and make those possible. And that is a complete loss to the
6 U.S. And I would suggest that no other developed country has
7 as much trouble as the U.S. does in indicating it's concern
8 about an independent film and TV production industry.

9 And I question why we've see the FCC make protective
10 provisions for independent ISPs in the Time Warner-AOL merger
11 but turn a complete blind eye to independent producers. When
12 they are the storytellers and when they create a type of value
13 that is something beyond the pure economic. Thank you.

14 **FEMALE VOICE:** (Inaudible) step up to the podium?

15 **MS. ORTIZ:** I just think it's going to take too long
16 because he literally has to leave in ten minutes.

17 **FEMALE VOICE:** Well, I don't think it takes too long to
18 step up two steps (inaudible).

19 **MS. GOLDSTONE:** My name is A.W. Goldstone. I'm an
20 attorney and a writer, and I'm also on the steering committee
21 of Interfaith Communities United for Justice and Peace, which
22 is a progressive antiwar organization. I come here to express
23 my grave concern about the impact on our democracy of
24 concentrated ownership of news purveyors and whether monopoly
25 ownership is associated with homogenization of information

1 provided to the public and how the homogenization impacts the
2 ability of voters to meaningfully exercise their franchise.

3 In the context of recent events, I'd like to present my
4 empirical experience as a consumer of information. And my
5 experience frankly tells us that we're going absolutely in the
6 wrong direction. Because in the context of the coverage of the
7 justification and prosecution of the Iraq War, there was almost
8 complete homogenization among the six major networks in terms
9 of the information that was presented to the American people.
10 Not only that, but the point-of-view represented was almost
11 completely identified with the Executive branch and with the
12 Bush administration.

13 Throughout the buildup, the foreign press consistently
14 reported misrepresentations and fabrications by the
15 administration that were under reported or unreported by the
16 big six. Similarly, during the war, the foreign press
17 indicated that the story being told to the American people was
18 not a balanced representation of events, but a carefully
19 constructed justification for the point of view of the
20 Executive branch. As alarming as the -- thank you -- and spin
21 of the information was the administration's and majority
22 leader's characterization of nonconforming news reports as
23 treason. Treason. Looked at from the outside we would have to
24 characterize much of what was presented as news as propaganda.

25 We must ask ourselves how long this state of affairs can

1 continue before we become a democracy in name only. And
2 frankly, I think that John Taplin gave it its name, which is
3 totalitarianism.

4 I want to thank you, Commissioner Copps, for coming here
5 and for trying to publicize the urgency surrounding the
6 proposed repeal of these regulations. And, please, before you
7 leave, if you could tell us what we can do to try and prevent
8 this from happening. Thank you.

9 **MS. PRITCHARD:** I'm Rosa Pritchard, private citizen. And
10 I've got a suggestion for a way to stop this corruption. I
11 sent a long e-mail to everybody on the registration list
12 yesterday morning about important information that the national
13 media has been withholding. If you didn't receive it, please
14 pick up one of these slips with the URL link to an article I
15 wrote for Democrats.com about this before the 2002 election.
16 I'll put these slips with the URL of my piece and my e-mail
17 address on the table outside the door.

18 I contend that already the national media has gotten
19 itself into a worse cover-up trap than the Catholic church. I
20 suggested that the best way to demonstrate this is by
21 explaining the basic facts of a lawsuit against George W. Bush,
22 which have been withheld from the electorate. How many people
23 know that during the 2000 campaign, the national press kept
24 secret the fact that George W. Bush was a defendant in a
25 whistleblower lawsuit brought by the executive director of the

1 Texas Funeral Services Commission?

2 She alleged that she was fired before -- because she
3 attempted to enforce state laws allegedly violated by Service
4 Corporation International, the world's largest death care
5 corporation, a major contributor to the Bush family. She
6 alleged in her lawsuit that Governor Bush had lied under oath,
7 obstructed justice, and been guilty of influence peddling.
8 Filed in 1999, the lawsuit was at first reported in a normal
9 way by the local and national media until Bush became the GOP
10 presidential nominee, when it was disappeared. Unreported, it
11 continued to steadily advance through the discovery process,
12 including the taking of depositions that contradicted Bush's
13 sworn affidavit, throughout the campaign and through the first
14 nine months of the Bush presidency.

15 In stunning contrast to the hyping of the Paula Jones
16 case, the media kept everything about the legal developments in
17 the suit against Bush secret, including its secret settlement
18 in the Fall of 2001 by the office of Bush's co-defendant, then
19 Texas Attorney General John Cornyn, just before he announced
20 his candidacy for the U.S. Senate. The story of Cornyn's
21 involvement was then disappeared throughout his Senate
22 campaign.

23 I wrote my democrats.com article to get the information on
24 the record and to speculate that the major reason the press
25 withheld a story that might have undermined Bush's promise to

1 restore honor and integrity to the White House was their
2 understanding that his FCC appointees would further deregulate
3 monopolistic media ownership. What's apparently going on here
4 is simply greed on the part of media owners and fear on the
5 part of journalists.

6 People are naturally wary of anything that smacks of a
7 conspiracy theory, but this dynamic requires no conspiracy.
8 The bottom line is simply that when media ownership is
9 concentrated in the hands of a few, virtually no journalists
10 who want lasting careers will risk reporting information that
11 might threaten the interests of owners controlling major media
12 outlets.

13 We are not powerless to stop this corruption. This room
14 has been filled today with dramatic laments about how bad
15 things already are and how they're likely to get much worse.
16 I'll wrap it up. But we can stop this if we really want to.
17 We can get the attention of the public about this danger by
18 finding a way to tell the public about the Funeralgate lawsuit
19 and other important stories already that the already too
20 concentrating media has been withholding. People would
21 understand that something has gone drastically haywire with the
22 press if they learned that in contrast to the exhaustive
23 reporting of every alleged allegation against Clinton, the
24 media withheld the news of the legal developments in a
25 whistleblower lawsuit brought against Bush by the executive

1 director of a state agency.

2 I'm an ordinary citizen and I'm not rich, but I have no
3 doubt whatsoever that the people in this room could find a way
4 to use the information in my democrats.com piece, Media
5 Cover-up is the Key to Cornyn's Senate Race in Texas, to break
6 out the news about the danger of further deregulation by the
7 FCC. Please read my piece. Think this through. Produce an
8 information -- infomercial. Buy ads, tell your friends. Do
9 something effective, fight back now.

10 **COMMISSIONER COPPS:** Sandra, can I -- can I make a couple
11 of comments? I -- I find myself as you know -- you know where
12 I find myself right now is in a very awkward position, because
13 I have got to be on an airplane in less than two hours. And
14 I'm already cutting it -- cutting it kind of close, and I have
15 some obligations in Washington tomorrow with this issue and
16 some others that I cannot ignore. So I guess I would ask first
17 of all, is this -- this is going to continue to be taped?

18 **MS. ORTIZ:** Yes.

19 **COMMISSIONER COPPS:** Okay. So let me make two
20 suggestions. I will obviously be looking at the tape and I
21 hope these comments will continue because I think this is some
22 of the most valuable input that we get in a hearing like this.
23 In addition to that if anybody wants to e-mail me directly
24 before the tape gets there, I'm at mcopps@fcc.gov.

25 Now, let me just say a number of people have asked me and

1 I've gotten some notes, you know -- what can we do? We've only
2 got 35 days left. I think the previous speaker just hit on a
3 lot of what we can do is -- and I tried to indicate this in my
4 remarks. We've got to do everything we can to try to make this
5 a grassroots effort. It involves using the Internet. Finding
6 some -- some other spokesmen to speak out who can compel
7 network attention. We have tried to talk and strategize a
8 little bit about this last night at dinner and will continue to
9 do so. But we've got to make sure that we use the momentum
10 that has been created here now to try to make a difference
11 between now and June 2nd, and hopefully we can make a
12 difference.

13 Hopefully, we can slow things down a little bit.
14 Hopefully we can get these proposals, whatever they are, that
15 are going to be introduced out in the sunshine of public
16 opinion, before we carve them into -- into stone. And then
17 going forward from that, we need to use this momentum to make
18 sure that we can really spark a grassroots dialogue on the
19 future of media in this country. And I think -- I think we've
20 started down that road.

21 We've got a long way to go, but we -- I think we've got
22 enough momentum where maybe we can compel that. But, you know,
23 take your thoughts to the talk shows, letters to the editor,
24 your neighbors, your decision makers, your elected officials,
25 wherever you can. It's a critically important four weeks that

1 we are about to embark on here. We're at perhaps the most
2 critical for our telecommunication issues in many, many years.

3 And with that I -- I really have to make sincere and
4 abject apologies, but I'm going to have to go. But I do want
5 to hear what everybody here has to say and I do want you to
6 e-mail me. I will watch the tape, and I'm happy to talk to any
7 of these folks anytime.

8 And I want to thank you again for convening what I think
9 was a very valuable session here. I've picked up new granular
10 information and detailed information, which I will try to share
11 with my colleagues. I picked up a lot of new perspectives,
12 just drinking in the wisdom of people who have been in the
13 industry for so very, very long and really have a feel for it's
14 heart and soul. And that's important to me too. So it's
15 been -- it's been very valuable and instructive for me, and I
16 hope you will continue the dialogue here when I leave. And I
17 hope you will continue the dialogue when you leave this room
18 too with everybody else.

19 So I want to thank everybody for taking the time and
20 trouble to come out.

21 **MS. SNOW:** My name is Nancy Snow. I teach in the
22 Annenberg School for Communication and also at Cal State
23 Fullerton in the College of Communications. Washington, D.C.
24 is into liberating people in other countries' business. We,
25 the people of the United States, deserve more than our fair

1 share of liberation from our media oligopolies.

2 Brian Lowery, media writer of the LA Times, stated last
3 week on a panel that the FCC new rule changes affecting
4 consolidation and ownership of media is, in his words,
5 tremulously underreported. Probably the most underreported
6 news story of our time. In fact, the consolidation story is
7 being reported, but not on the front pages of our newspapers.
8 It is in the business and finance sections of newspapers.
9 Broadcast industry publications, where only those in the know,
10 in the biz, insiders follow this subject.

11 We have become Walter Lipman's bewildered herd. The
12 public functions like the angry mob at the gates or the
13 proverbial peanut gallery. Occasionally whining that nothing
14 is on to watch, but we know not where to turn for help. So we
15 just keep watching. In fact, I don't believe anyone here has
16 addressed the addictive qualities of watching television, which
17 were pointed out over 20 years ago by Jerry Mander in his book,
18 Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television.

19 It is truly ironic that as we sit here today discussing
20 American press ownership, the United States Government is
21 re-broadcasting Dan Rather, Tom Brokaw and Peter Jennings on
22 Iraqi TV to show the Iraqi people what a free press looks like
23 in a democracy. Before we teach others about democracy, we
24 might try practicing it here at home.

25 Media power is political power, stated in Ben Bagdikian's

1 book, The Media Monopoly. No wonder the public is largely left
2 out of this major decision that affects all our lives. We've
3 been asked to sit on the sidelines, to keep shopping, or follow
4 the N-B -- NBA playoffs, while the corporate mega-media and
5 their appointed friends in government cozy up and bring us
6 anything but a democrat --

7 (End of Side B of Tape 3. Beginning of Side A, Tape 4.)

8 **MS. SNOW:** -- applies to official Washington and other
9 corporate sources of news. One 24-hour news cycle requires
10 constant feeding. Which advertising and publicity pre-packaged
11 sources of news are only happy to nourish. In the Federal
12 Government, the largest public relations division is inside the
13 Pentagon, where government public relations specialists provide
14 Monday through Friday feeds to the national media. Embedded
15 reporters didn't just accompany the middle -- the military to
16 the Middle East, but they also sit for pre-arranged briefings
17 from Rumsfeld, Tori Clark and Ari Fleischer.

18 In the corporate media environment today, the best
19 journalist is increasingly the dutiful journalist. Who
20 understands his or her symbiotic relationship between official
21 channels of information sources and the news story product.
22 Helen Thomas, are you listening?

23 Long gone are the days of independent journalists like
24 George Seldis, who would have gladly been kicked out of his
25 first Washington press briefing in exchange for the

1 neighborhood goings on back home.

2 Just last week, a little truth emerged from the fog of
3 war. MSNBC journalist Ashleigh Banfield told a gathering of
4 students at Kansas State University, which is usually where the
5 peanut gallery gathers, that the American people didn't see
6 what happened after mortars landed in Iraq -- only the puffs of
7 smoke. There were horrors completely left out of the war
8 coverage in the United States.

9 On the other hand, what we did see was advertising,
10 converging media and official sources of news. Generals
11 basically around the clock, who gave us a nonstop flow of
12 images by cable news operators who wrap themselves in the
13 American flag and go after a certain target demographic. It
14 was, she said, "a grand and glorious picture that had a lot of
15 people watching and a lot of advertisers excited about cable TV
16 news." But it wasn't journalism.

17 I am here as a journalism professor, and I can tell you
18 whether it's in the College of Communications at Cal State
19 Fullerton or here in the Annenberg School, journalism
20 concentrations, at least in our college back at Cal State
21 Fullerton, are all but dead. While advertising and public
22 relations concentrations are thriving. Why? Because students
23 are wise to the fact that the news media business is where the
24 jobs are. Business. Not creating the next Murrow or Cronkite.

25 They know that broadcasting used to have a clear mandate